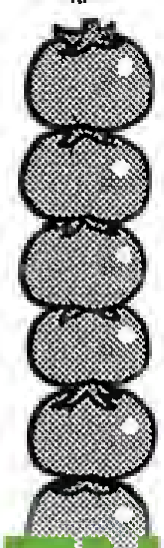
JUMP START SERIES

A TASTE OF WHAT'S NEW IN JAPAN



LYCOPENE THE TOMATOY POODLE

BY KOJI OISHI

One day, on her way home from school, Meh-Meh is transported to the wacky world of Cuteopia where she meets Lycopene, a Tomatoy Poodle.

MEH-MEH

LYCOPENE

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK IN THE **WEEKLY SURVEY!**

JUMP START!

A TASTE OF WHAT'S NEW IN JAPAN

LYCOPENE THE TOMATOY POODLE

2 CUTEOPIA'S MERRY BAND OF FRIENDS

THE SECRETS OF LYCOPENE'S BODY REVEALED!!

CUTESY LYCOPENE STEM

It's a fashionable green accent to his style! It can spin like a certain popular fidget toy.

FUZZY LYCOPENE EARS

Cute, floppy ears that don't hear anything Lycopene doesn't want to! If he flapped them up and down reeeally fast, he might even be able to fly for a few inches.

ADORABLE LYCOPENE EYES

Lycopene's two adorable eyes spot any loose change on the ground no matter how dark and grungy the gutter!

FLUFFY LYCOPENE RUFF

The fluffy fur around Lycopene's neck is especially soft and deep, almost like a fluffy scarf! It's just as toasty too!

PRECIOUS LYCOPENE PAWS

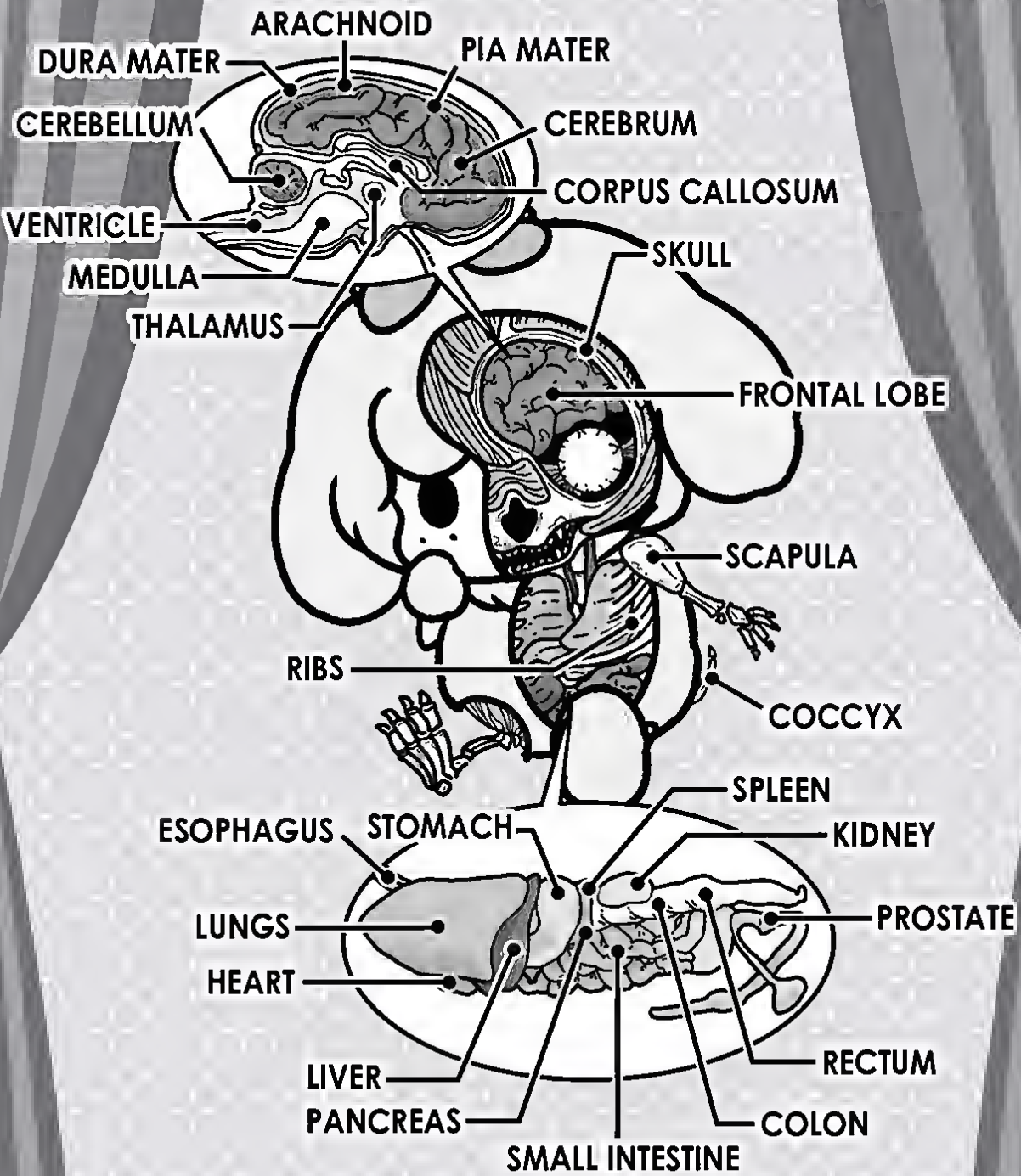
If you look really, really, reeeeeally closely, you'll see little paw pads in the shape of a tomato! Dip them in ink and they can be used as a personal stamp, but you really should think twice before using them to stamp your signature as a co-signer on your friend's contracts.

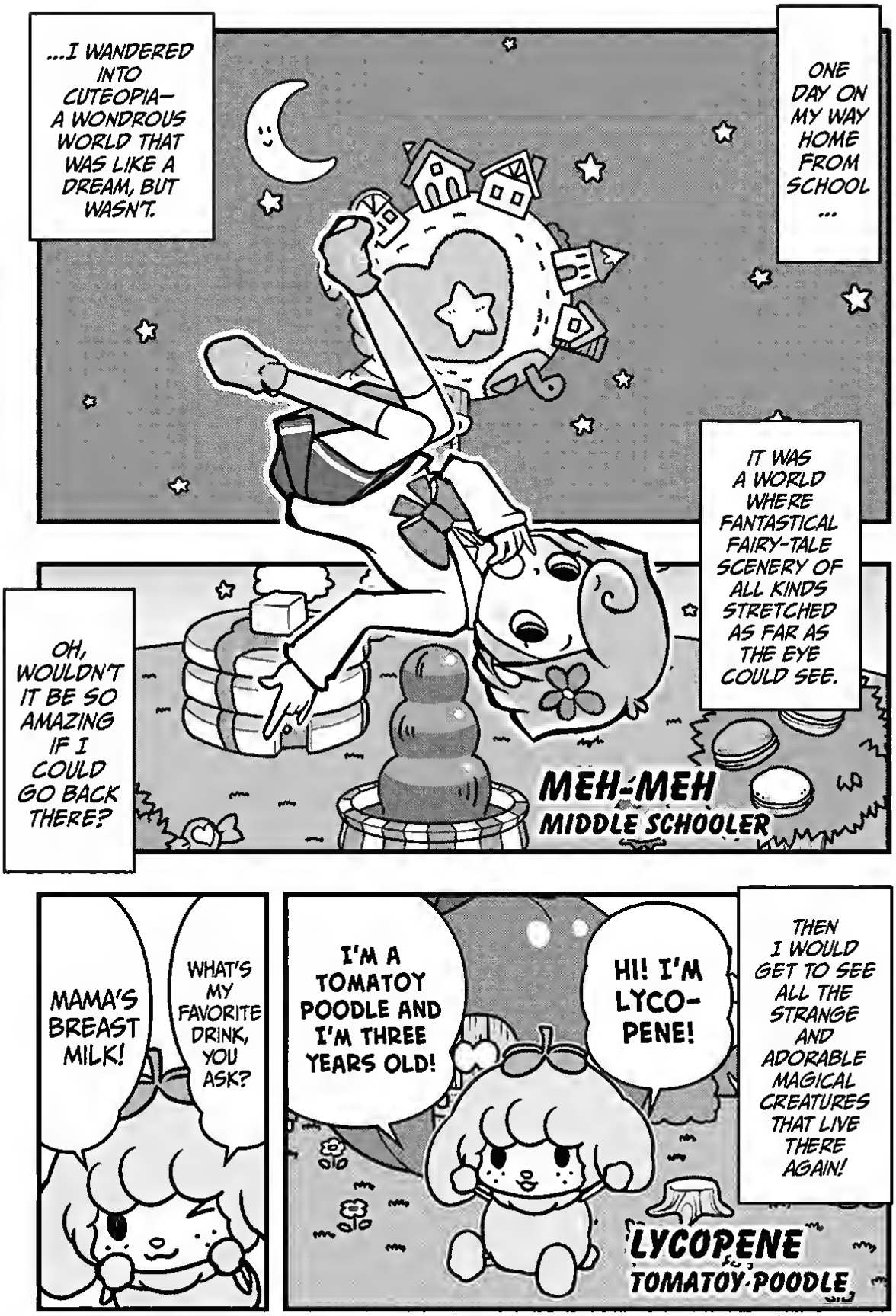
PUFFY LYCOPENE TAIL

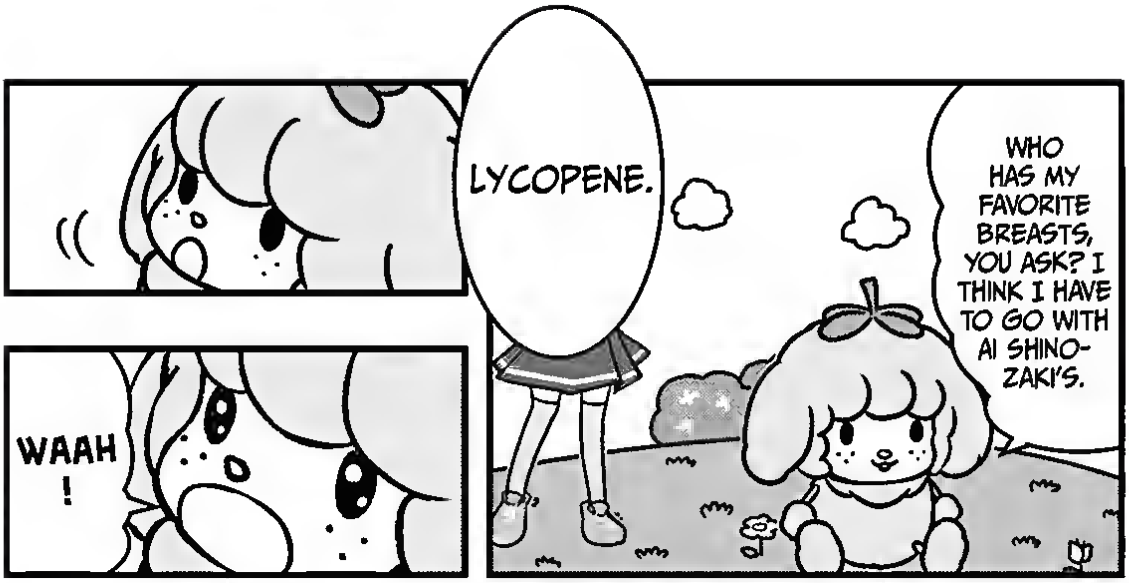
Pull it and it extends! It's super useful for all kinds of things, like as a brush for painting or as bait for fishing!

BY KOJI OISHI

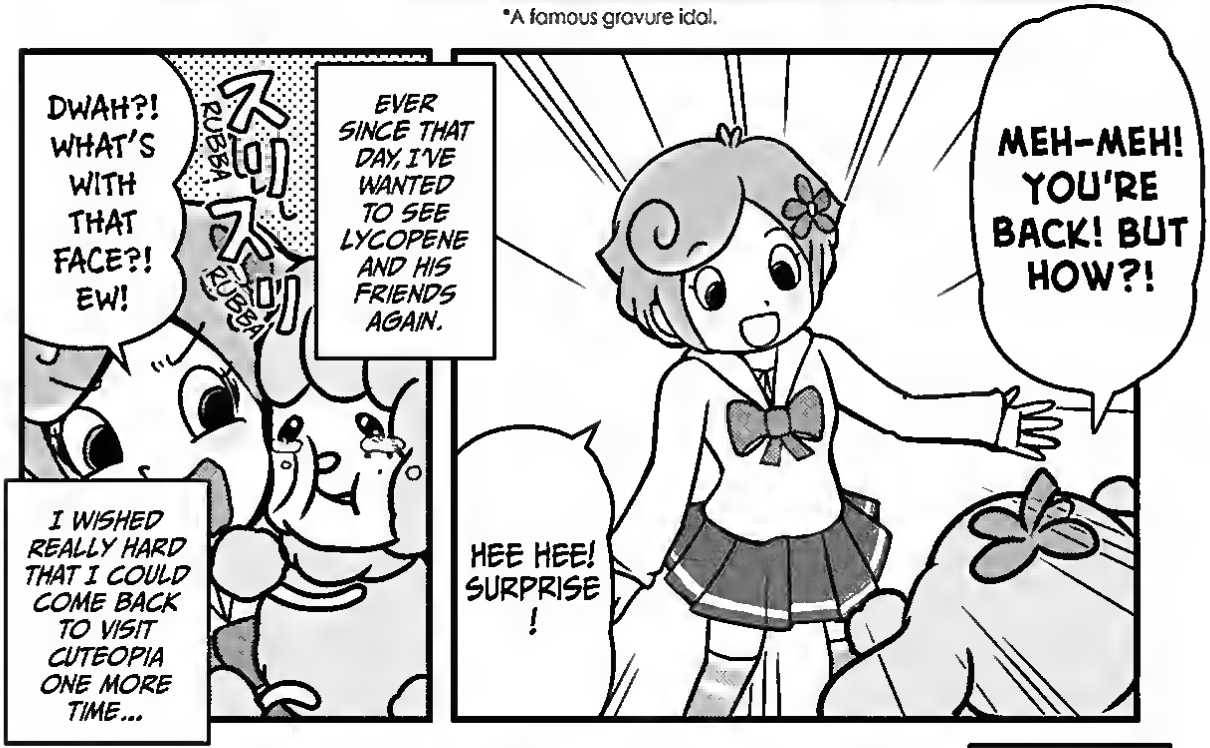
THE SECRETS OF LYCOPENE'S BODY REVEALED!!

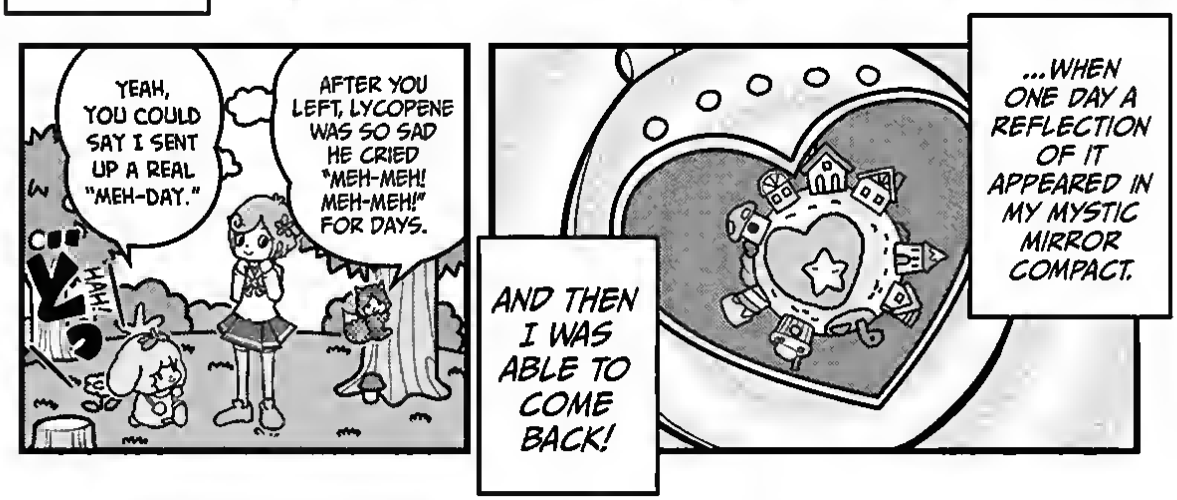



ONE DAY ON MY WAY HOME FROM SCHOOL ...
...I WANDERED INTO CUTEOPIA— A WONDROUS WORLD THAT WAS LIKE A DREAM, BUT WASN'T.
IT WAS A WORLD WHERE FANTASTICAL FAIRY-TALE SCENERY OF ALL KINDS STRETCHED AS FAR AS THE EYE COULD SEE.
OH, WOULDN'T IT BE SO AMAZING IF I COULD GO BACK THERE?
MEH-MEH
MIDDLE SCHOOLER
THEN I WOULD GET TO SEE ALL THE STRANGE AND ADORABLE MAGICAL CREATURES THAT LIVE THERE AGAIN!
HI! I'M LYCO-PENE!
I'M A TOMATOY POODLE AND I'M THREE YEARS OLD!
LYCOPENE
TOMATOY-POODLE
WHAT'S MY FAVORITE DRINK, YOU ASK?
MAMA'S BREAST MILK!

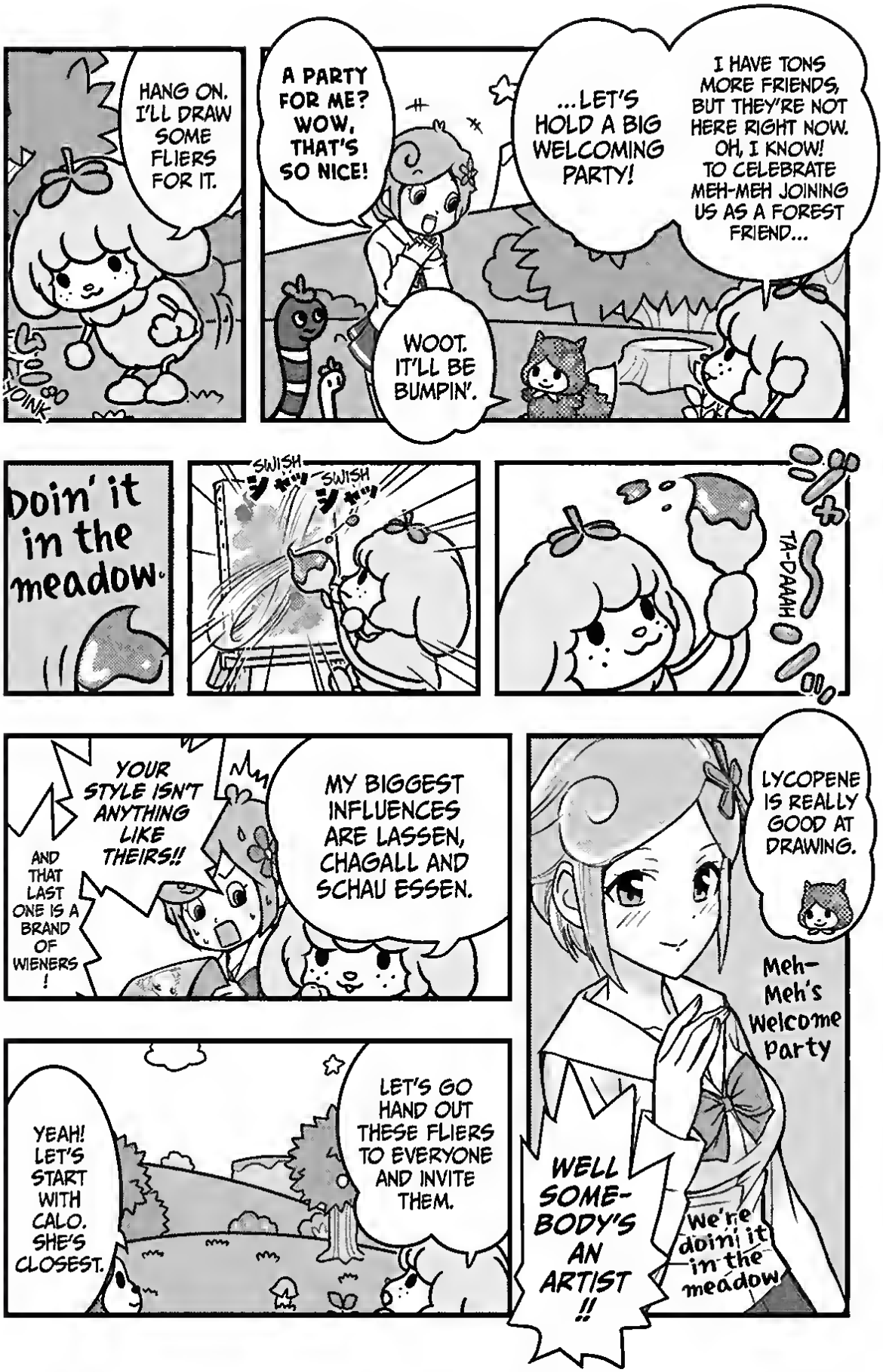


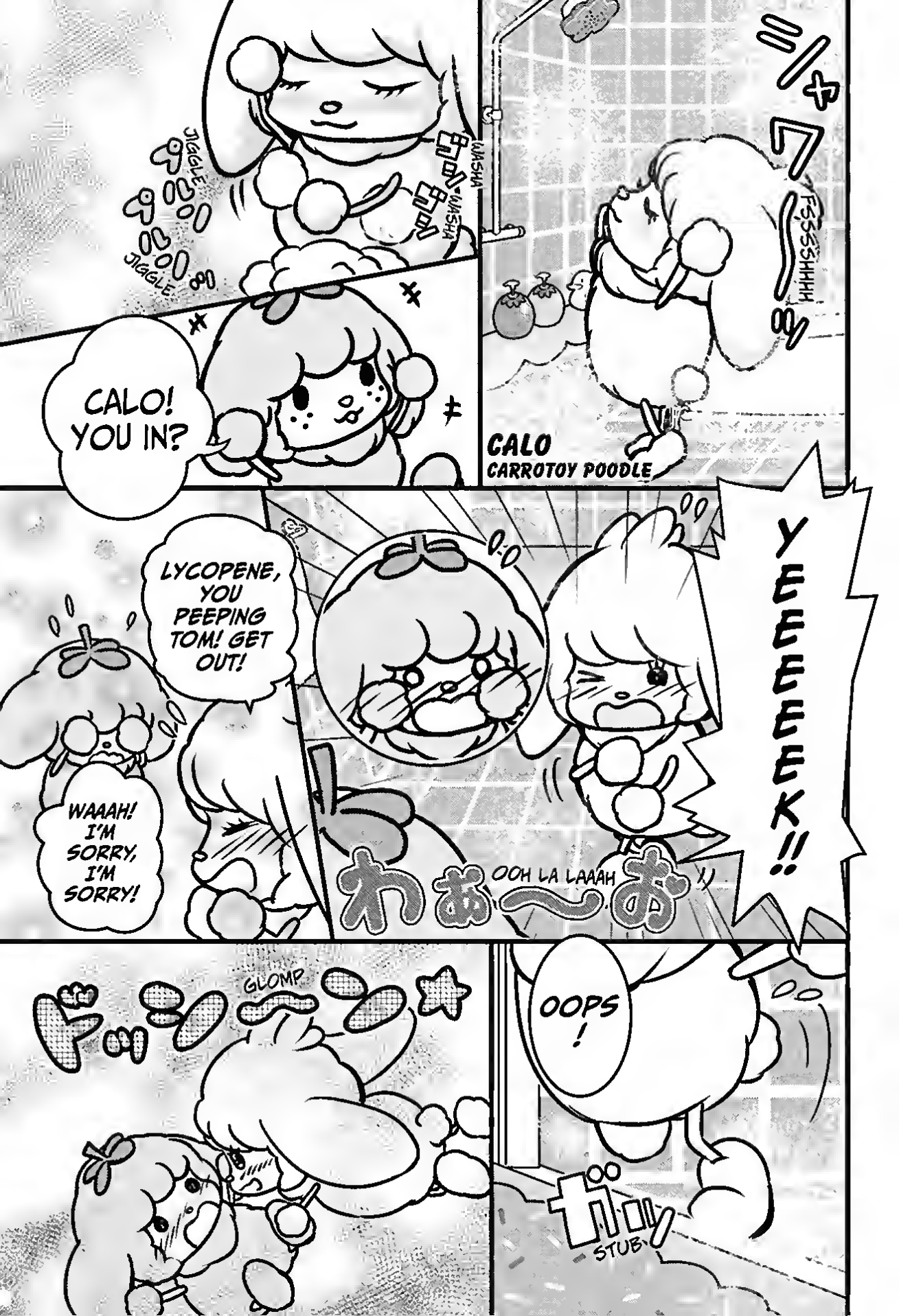
*A famous gravure idol.

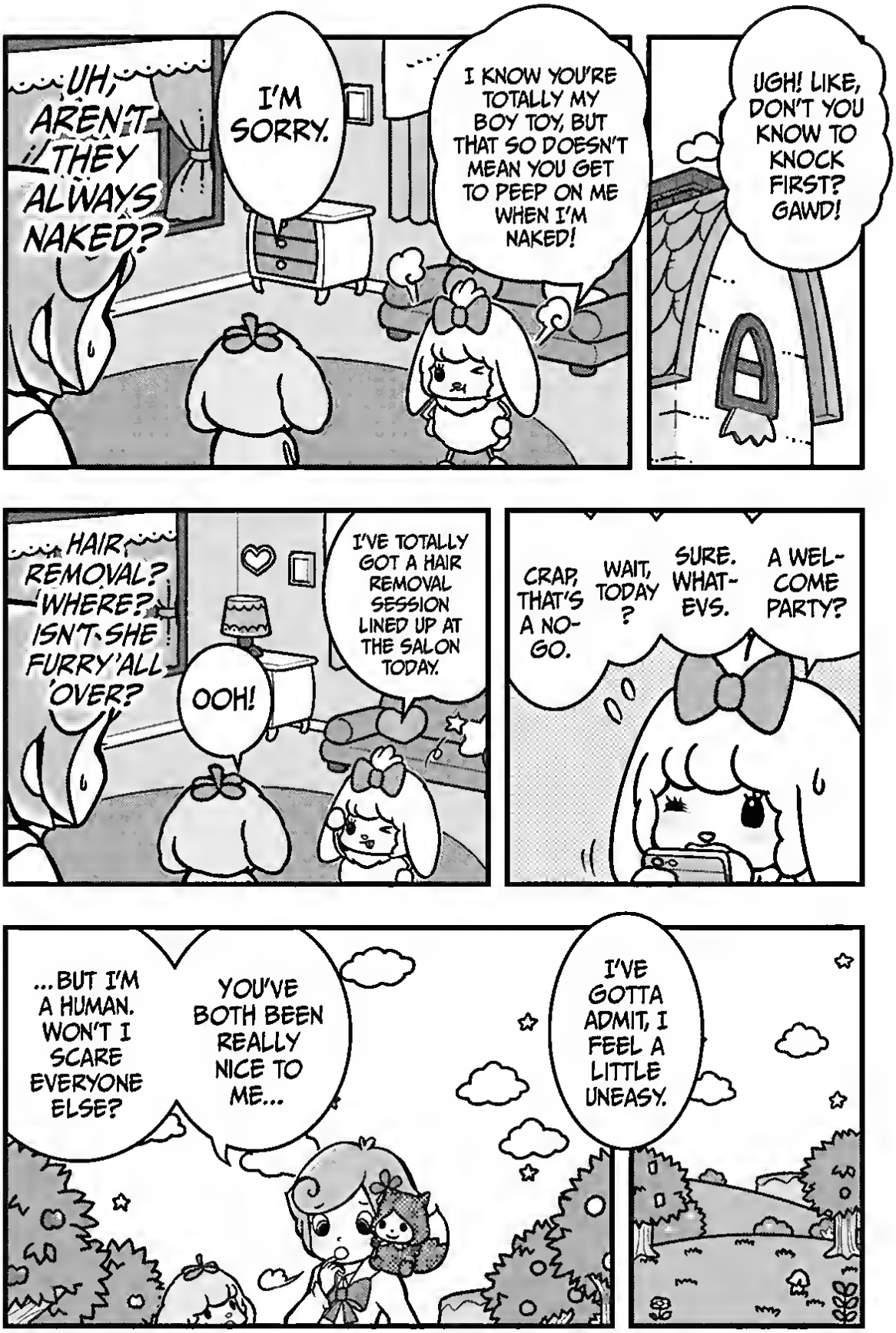

DWAH?! WHAT'S WITH THAT FACE?! EW!
RUBBA
RUBBA
EVER SINCE THAT DAY, I'VE WANTED TO SEE LYCOPENE AND HIS FRIENDS AGAIN.
MEH-MEH! YOU'RE BACK! BUT HOW?!
HEE HEE! SURPRISE !
I WISHED REALLY HARD THAT I COULD COME BACK TO VISIT CUTEOPIA ONE MORE TIME...


YEAH, YOU COULD SAY I SENT UP A REAL "MEH-DAY."
AFTER YOU LEFT, LYCOPENE WAS SO SAD HE CRIED "MEH-MEH! MEH-MEH!" FOR DAYS.
HAH!
...WHEN ONE DAY A REFLECTION OF IT APPEARED IN MY MYSTIC MIRROR COMPACT.
AND THEN I WAS ABLE TO COME BACK!

YOU BET! WE'RE EVEN CLOSER PALS THAN KATORI, INAGAKI AND KUSANAGI!
ME AND LYCOPENE ARE BEST FRIENDS!
UH, I DON'T KNOW HOW TO COMMENT ON THAT.
*Katari, Inagaki and Kusanagi are three of the five members of the famous band SMAP.
YEP! I WAS BORN FROM A PEACH, SO I'M A MOMO-MONGA!
OH, HELLO! YOU'RE, UM.. THIAMIN, RIGHT?
THIAMIN
MOMOMONGA
*Peach Flying Squirrel
OH, YOU'RE ALL SO CUTE!☆ IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU TOO!
IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU, MEH-MEH.
LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO MORE OF MY FRIENDS! THOSE WIENER-LOOKING WORMS ARE THE MANGO-STEENANAGO FAMILY.
THE MANGOSTEENANAGO FAMILY
*Mangasteen Spotted Garden Eels
DOES EVERY-THING LOOK LIKE A WIENER TO YOU?!
AND THIS TEENY LITTLE WIENER-LIKE MONKEY IS A LEMON-MARMOSET. HIS NAME IS KUEN-CHAN.
Close up!
KUEN-CHAN
LEMONMARMOSET
*Kuen is a pun on kuen-san or citric acid
HOO
HOO
THE WIENER-LOOKING BIRD UP IN THE TREE IS BUKURO. HE'S THE LOCAL ELDER.
BUKURO
TAMAFUKURO
*Ball owl
AND THIS KOALA WITH A WIENER-LIKE HAT IS EUCALY, THE KINO-KOALA.
EUCALY
KINOKOALA
*Mushroom Koala


HANG ON. I'LL DRAW SOME FLIERS FOR IT.
OINK
A PARTY FOR ME? WOW, THAT'S SO NICE!
...LET'S HOLD A BIG WELCOMING PARTY!
I HAVE TONS MORE FRIENDS, BUT THEY'RE NOT HERE RIGHT NOW. OH, I KNOW! TO CELEBRATE MEH-MEH JOINING US AS A FOREST FRIEND...
WOOT. IT'LL BE BUMPIN'.
Doin' it in the meadow.
SWISH
SWISH
TA-DAAAH
YOUR STYLE ISN'T ANYTHING LIKE THEIRS!!
AND THAT LAST ONE IS A BRAND OF WIENERS!
MY BIGGEST INFLUENCES ARE LASSEN, CHAGALL AND SCHAU ESSEN.
LYCOPENE IS REALLY GOOD AT DRAWING.
Meh-Meh's Welcome party
We're doin' it in the meadow
WELL SOME-BODY'S AN ARTIST!!
LET'S GO HAND OUT THESE FLIERS TO EVERYONE AND INVITE THEM.
YEAH! LET'S START WITH CALO. SHE'S CLOSEST.

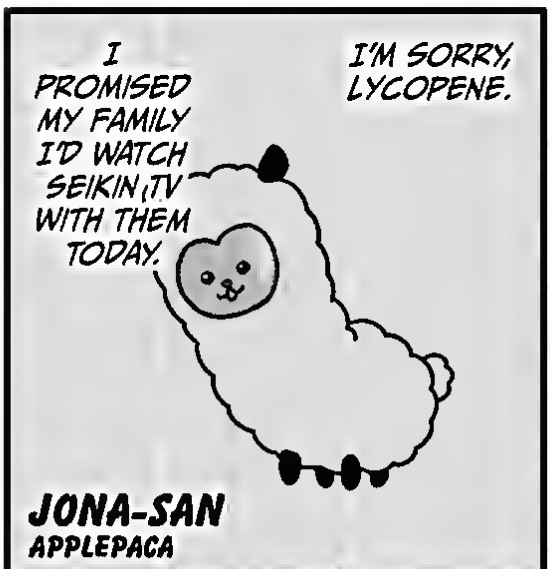

JIGGLE
JIGGLE
WASHA WASHA
CALO! YOU IN?
FSSSSHHHH
CALO
CARROTOY POODLE
YEEEEEK!!
LYCOPENE, YOU PEEPING TOM! GET OUT!
WAAAH! I'M SORRY, I'M SORRY!
わぉ～ぉ
OOH LA LAAAH
GLOMP
OOPS!
STUB


UH, AREN'T THEY ALWAYS NAKED?
I'M SORRY.
I KNOW YOU'RE TOTALLY MY BOY TOY, BUT THAT SO DOESN'T MEAN YOU GET TO PEEP ON ME WHEN I'M NAKED!
UGH! LIKE, DON'T YOU KNOW TO KNOCK FIRST? GAWD!
HAIR REMOVAL? WHERE? ISN'T SHE FURRY ALL OVER?
OOH!
I'VE TOTALLY GOT A HAIR REMOVAL SESSION LINED UP AT THE SALON TODAY.
CRAP, THAT'S A NO-GO.
WAIT, TODAY?
SURE. WHAT-EVS.
A WELCOME PARTY?
...BUT I'M A HUMAN. WON'T I SCARE EVERYONE ELSE?
YOU'VE BOTH BEEN REALLY NICE TO ME...
I'VE GOTTA ADMIT, I FEEL A LITTLE UNEASY.

"IF YOU DON'T VENTURE TO POKE THE WASP NEST, YOUR BALLS WON'T SWELL."
YEAH, DON'T WORRY MEH-MEH. YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT THESE THINGS...
IT'S OKAY, MEH-MEH! WE TOLD EVERYONE ALL ABOUT YOU ALREADY AND THEY ALL SAID THEY'D LOVE TO MEET YOU!
THAT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE ANY PROVERB I'VE HEARD BEFORE!!
GOSH, WHAT A PRETTY SONG. WHERE IS IT COMING FROM?
HEY, EVERY-ONE? WE'RE HOLDING A WELCOMING PARTY FOR MEH-MEH, AND WAS HOPING YOU'D COME SING FOR US.
HOW RARE. ♪
OOH. A HUMAN. ♫
EACH SINGS ONLY A SINGLE NOTE, AND THEY WEAVE THAT INTO HARMONIES.
OH, THAT'S THE RAINBOW PARAKEET SEPTUPLETS SINGING.
RAINBOCHADDOINKO
THAT'S SO AMAZING! I COULD LISTEN TO THEM FOR HOURS!
DENTIST APPOINT-MENT. ♪
GOTTA GO. ♫
WE'RE BUSY. ♫
SORRY LYCO-PENE. ♪
BIRDS GO TO THE DEN-TIST ?!

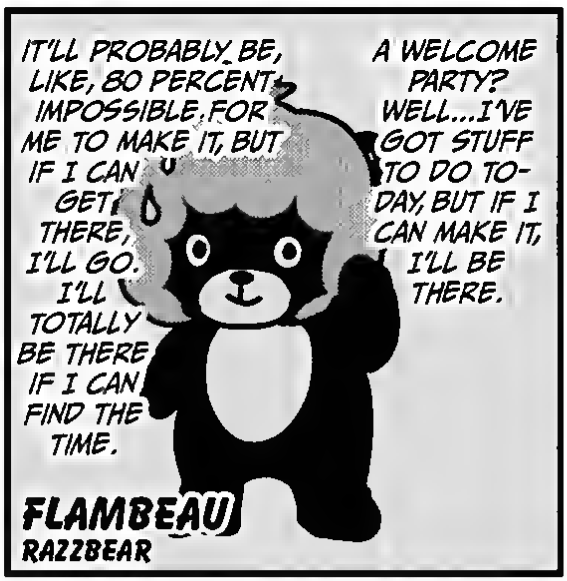
*Rainbow Orchard Parokeets

*Parsley Squirrel. His name is a pun on a slang way to say "hi."

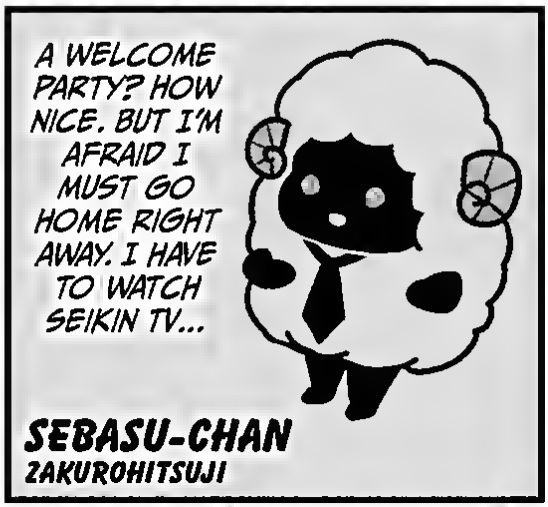


*Apple Alpaca. His first name is a pun for Jonathan.

*Seikin TV is a papular Japanese Youtuber.

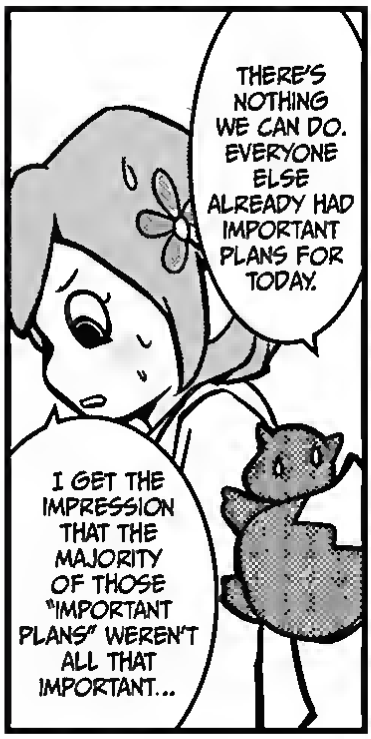

IT'LL PROBABLY BE, LIKE, 80 PERCENT IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO MAKE IT, BUT IF I CAN GET THERE, I'LL GO. I'LL TOTALLY BE THERE IF I CAN FIND THE TIME.
A WELCOME PARTY? WELL...I'VE GOT STUFF TO DO TODAY, BUT IF I CAN MAKE IT, I'LL BE THERE.
FLAMBEAU
RAZZBEAR

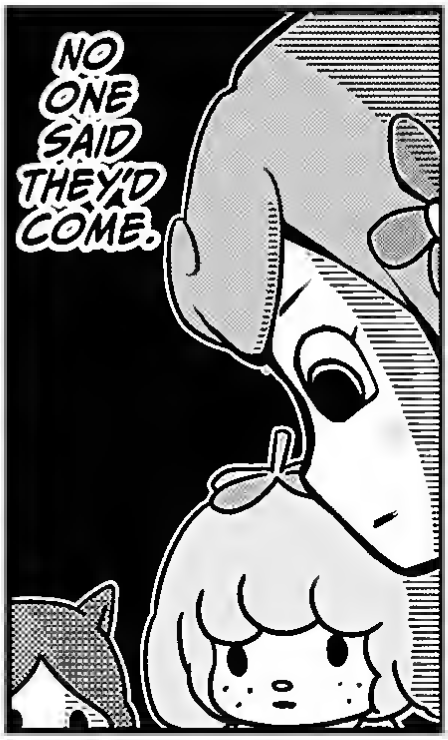
*Raspberry Bear



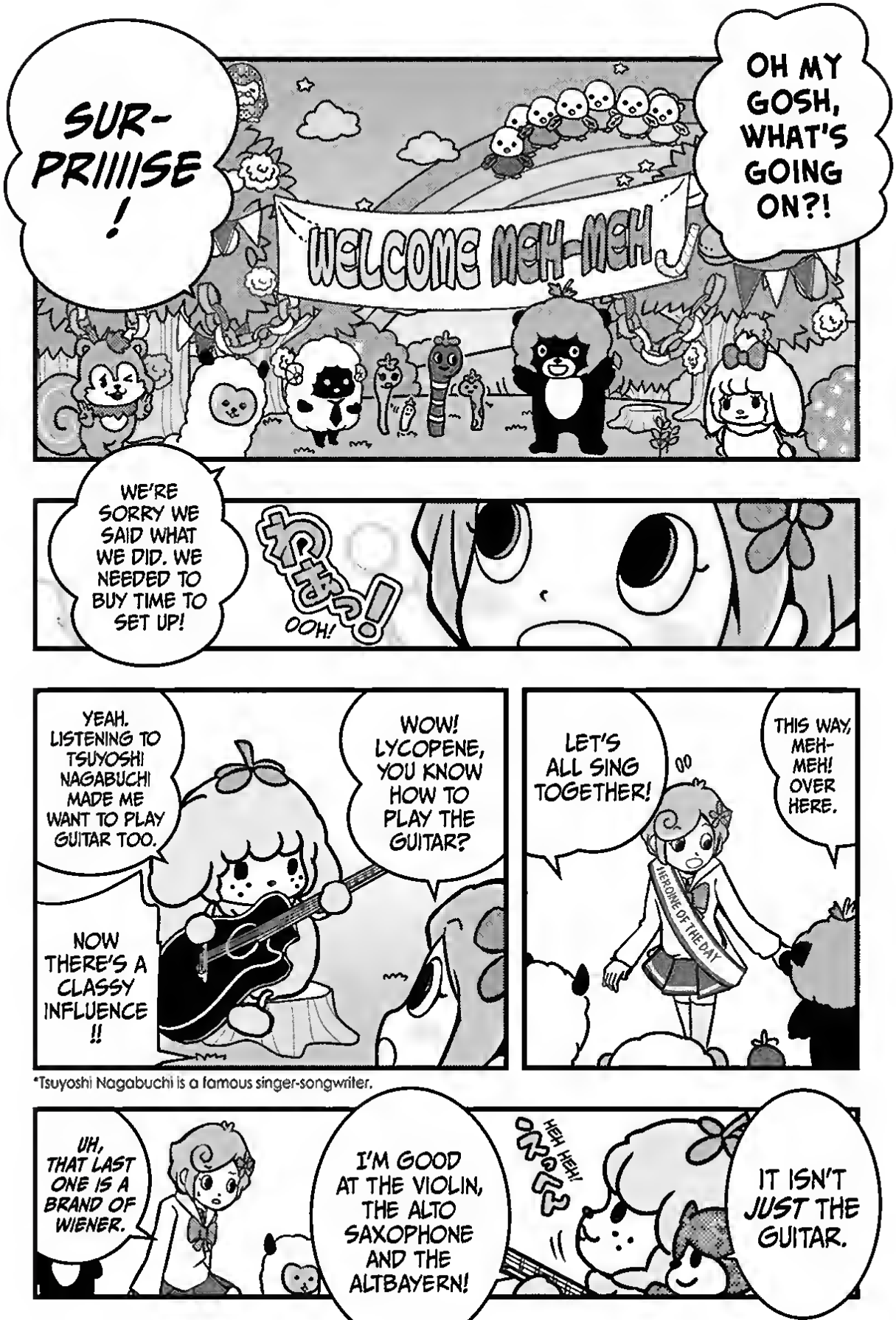
*Pamegranate Sheep. His first name is a pun for Sebastian.

*Mikan Kangaroo.

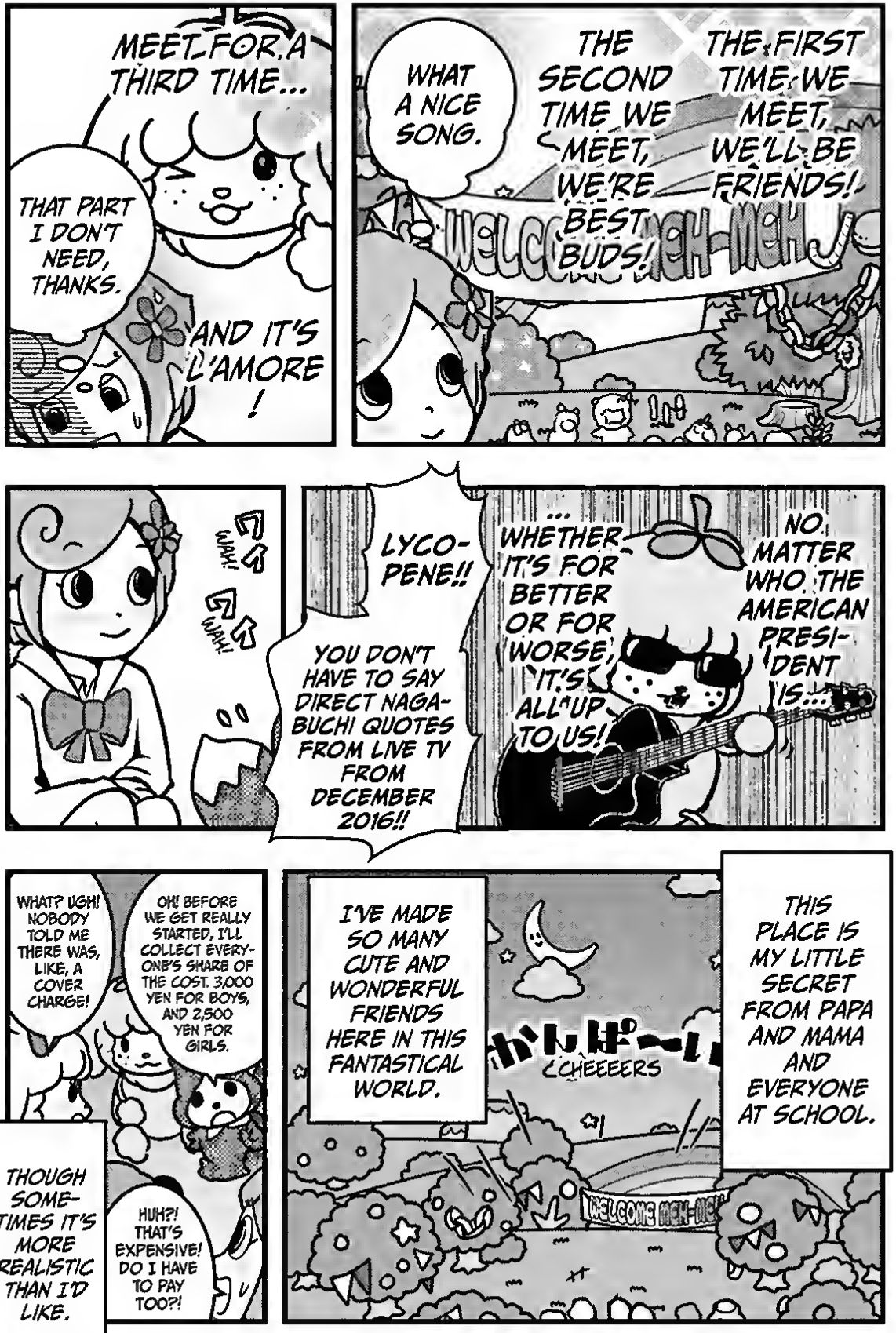

THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO. EVERYONE ELSE ALREADY HAD IMPORTANT PLANS FOR TODAY.
I GET THE IMPRESSION THAT THE MAJORITY OF THOSE "IMPORTANT PLANS" WEREN'T ALL THAT IMPORTANT...



JUST THE FACT THAT YOU DID THAT FOR ME MAKES ME SUPER HAPPY.
NO, IT'S OKAY. YOU DID THE BEST YOU COULD TO INVITE EVERYONE YOU KNOW.
I'M SORRY, MEH-MEH.


SUR-PRIIIISE!
WELCOME MEH-MEH
OH MY GOSH, WHAT'S GOING ON?!
WE'RE SORRY WE SAID WHAT WE DID. WE NEEDED TO BUY TIME TO SET UP!
やばっ!
OOH!
YEAH. LISTENING TO TSUYOSHI NAGABUCHI MADE ME WANT TO PLAY GUITAR TOO.
WOW! LYCOPENE, YOU KNOW HOW TO PLAY THE GUITAR?
NOW THERE'S A CLASSY INFLUENCE !!
LET'S ALL SING TOGETHER!
THIS WAY, MEH-MEH! OVER HERE.
HEROINE OF THE DAY
UH, THAT LAST ONE IS A BRAND OF WIENER.
I'M GOOD AT THE VIOLIN, THE ALTO SAXOPHONE AND THE ALTBAYERN!
HEH HEH!
IT ISN'T JUST THE GUITAR.

*Tsuyoshi Nagabuchi is a famous singer-songwriter.


MEET FOR A THIRD TIME...
THAT PART I DON'T NEED, THANKS.
AND IT'S L'AMORE!
WHAT A NICE SONG.
THE SECOND TIME WE MEET, WE'RE BEST BUDS!
THE FIRST TIME WE MEET, WE'LL BE FRIENDS!
WELCOME MEH-MEH
WAH!
WAH!
LYCO-PENE!!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY DIRECT NAGA-BUCHI QUOTES FROM LIVE TV FROM DECEMBER 2016!!
... WHETHER IT'S FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE, IT'S ALL UP TO US!
NO MATTER WHO THE AMERICAN PRESI-DENT IS...
WHAT? UGH! NOBODY TOLD ME THERE WAS, LIKE, A COVER CHARGE!
OH! BEFORE WE GET REALLY STARTED, I'LL COLLECT EVERY-ONE'S SHARE OF THE COST. 3,000 YEN FOR BOYS, AND 2,500 YEN FOR GIRLS.
HUH?! THAT'S EXPENSIVE! DO I HAVE TO PAY TOO?!
THOUGH SOME-TIMES IT'S MORE REALISTIC THAN I'D LIKE.
I'VE MADE SO MANY CUTE AND WONDERFUL FRIENDS HERE IN THIS FANTASTICAL WORLD.
かんぱ～い
CHEEEERS
WELCOME MEH-MEH
THIS PLACE IS MY LITTLE SECRET FROM PAPA AND MAMA AND EVERYONE AT SCHOOL.

TO BE CONTINUED...